



**Written Testimony of
Sharon M. Palmer, Commissioner
Department of Labor
Labor and Public Employees Committee
February 17, 2015**

Good Day Senator Winfield, Representative Tercyak, Senator Hwang and Representative Rutigliano and members of the Labor and Public Employees Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to provide you with written testimony regarding *Senate Bill 431 AAC Foreign Workers Recruitment Fees*. My name is Sharon Palmer and I am the Labor Commissioner:

At this time, I am unsure to what programs this bill refers. This department primarily deals with the H-2A temporary agricultural worker program. Our obligations under the H-2A program are to review the job order sent in by the employer prior to submission to the US Department of Labor, Chicago National Processing Center, and to schedule and conduct housing inspections prior to the approval of the H-2A workers' arrival. We also have the responsibility to post the job orders to our job bank to recruit domestic workers.

According to US Citizenship and Immigration Services, a petitioner, agent, facilitator, recruiter, or similar employment service is prohibited from collecting a job placement fee or other compensation (either direct or indirect) at any time from an H-2A worker as a condition of employment.

H-2A labor contractors have the same obligations and are subject to the same laws as the employers who utilize the H-2A program under federal law. These employers and contractors come under the jurisdiction of the US Department of Labor.

I await further language that would clarify the intent of this proposed bill.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide input concerning this proposed bill.